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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/775,715	02/01/2001	Mani S. Abrol	1220335-991180	7897

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EXAMINER

CHEN, CHONGSHAN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2172

DATE MAILED: 12/31/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/775,715

Applicant(s)

ABROL ET AL.

Examiner

Chongshan Chen

Art Unit

2172

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 5.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ballard [5,987,457].

Regarding to claim 1, Ballard discloses a system for user behavior based ranking of a document, comprising:

means for determining a feature vector associated with a document, the feature vector comprising weights for certain terms that appear in the document; and means for modifying the feature vector for the document based on user actions during a search session so that the document is more highly ranked in response to the user actions (Ballard, col. 2, lines 1-28).

Regarding to claim 2, Ballard teaches all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 1, and further discloses collecting user actions in response to a list of documents produced in response to a query wherein the user actions include selecting a document from the list of documents (Ballard, col. 2, lines 1-28).

Regarding to claim 3, Ballard teaches all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 2, and further discloses adjusting the weights of the terms in the feature vector that match terms in a query that produced the list of documents so that the ranking of the document is higher in response to the adjustment of the weights (Ballard, col. 2, lines 1-28).

Claims 4-6 are rejected on grounds corresponding to the reasons given above for claims 1-3.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 7-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ballard [5,987,457] in view of Burrows [6,021,409].

Regarding to claim 7, Ballard discloses a system for user behavior based searching of a document based on a query having one or more query terms, comprising:

means for determining a feature vector associated with a document, the feature vector comprising weights for certain terms that appear in the document; and means for modifying the feature vector for the document based on user actions during a query of the document so that the document is more highly ranked in response to the user actions (Ballard, col. 2, lines 1-28).

Ballard does not explicitly disclose returning the same document to another user with the same query at a higher ranking due to the modified feature vector. Burrows discloses a modified collection frequency weighing technique can be used to rank the pages then present the list to the user (Burrows, col. 26, lines 29-32), which will result the same document to another user with the same query at a higher ranking due to the modified feature vector. Therefore, it would have

Art Unit: 2172

been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the method of Ballard with the method of Burrows in order to rank search results.

Regarding to claim 8, Ballard and Burrows teach all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 7, and further discloses collecting user actions in response to a list of documents produced in response to a query wherein the user actions include selecting a document from the list of documents (Ballard, col. 2, lines 1-28).

Regarding to claim 9, Ballard and Burrows teach all the claimed subject matters as discussed in claim 8, and further discloses adjusting the frequency values of the terms in the feature vector that match terms in a query that produced the list of documents so that the ranking of the document is higher in response to the adjustment of the frequency values (Ballard, col. 2, lines 1-28).

Claims 10-12 are rejected on grounds corresponding to the reasons given above for claims 7-9.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Chongshan Chen whose telephone number is (703) 305-8319. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday (8:00 am - 4:30 pm).


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kim Y Vu can be reached on (703)305-4393. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 746-7239 for regular communications and (703) 746-7238 for After Final communications.

Art Unit: 2172

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)305-3900.

CC

December 26, 2002



JEAN M. CORRIELUS
PRIMARY EXAMINER